

## ***2005 Press Releases***

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# February 2005

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Association;  
News Conference  
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Meth Legislation

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Missouri River  
Meeting in Sioux  
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Advisory: News  
Conference  
Tomorrow

Advisory: News  
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Today;  
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Announces  
Consumer Protection

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Release: Consumer  
Protection's 2004  
Numbers

Release:  
Matt Fuller's  
Sentence  
Column: Consumer  
Protection Week

20 21 22 23 24 25 26

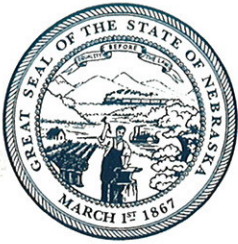
Release:  
ChoicePoint  
Notification

President's Day Holiday  
- State Offices Closed

27 28

Release: FBI  
E-mail Scam

Release: Free Credit  
Report Available  
Tomorrow



STATE OF NEBRASKA  
**Office of the Attorney General**

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**JON BRUNING**  
ATTORNEY GENERAL

Attorney General Jon Bruning  
Guest Column: February 28, 2005  
Contact: Regan Anson, 402-471-2067

**ChoicePoint Security Breach Affects 572 Nebraskans**

The news that Georgia-based data storage firm ChoicePoint Inc. had inadvertently sold documents containing the personal information of 145,000 people has been cause for great concern.

Because the documents sold contained information ranging from names, addresses, social security numbers, and driver's license numbers to abbreviated credit reports, we are painfully aware that these individuals are now at high risk for one of the fastest growing crimes in the United States, identity theft. Unfortunately, 572 Nebraskans are among the staggering number of people affected.

Following news of the security breach, I, along with 37 other Attorneys General, sent a letter to ChoicePoint demanding that they notify all consumers who may be affected by this criminal activity. The company, which had initially sent notification letters to California residents only, agreed to notify all consumers whose personal information was compromised. The company also agreed to share the list of potential victims in Nebraska with my office so that we can help them guard against identity theft.

In an effort to limit the devastating financial fallout that could occur for these victims, ChoicePoint has purchased credit reports and a one-year credit monitoring service for each individual who had their information compromised. Closely monitoring one's credit remains one of the best ways to guard against identity theft. The federal government acknowledged that fact when President George W. Bush signed the Fair and Accurate Credit Transactions Act into law in December 2003. The Act entitles every American to receive a free credit report each year, thereby allowing everyone the opportunity to check for unauthorized activity.

Nebraskans can begin accessing their free credit report beginning March 1, 2005. Annual Credit Report Forms can be obtained via the Federal Trade Commission's Web site at [www.ftc.gov/credit](http://www.ftc.gov/credit). Additionally, the three nationwide consumer reporting companies have set up a central Web site, [www.annualcreditreport.com](http://www.annualcreditreport.com); toll-free telephone number, 877-322-8228; and mailing address, Annual Credit Report Request Service, P.O. Box 105281, Atlanta, GA 30348-5281; to make it easy for consumers to order their free annual credit report.

*(more)*

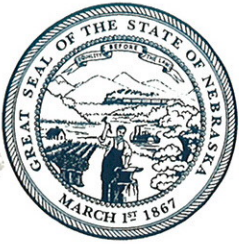


The ChoicePoint scandal also reiterates the importance of LB 294, part of the crime fighting legislative package I introduced earlier this year. Once a person's identity has been stolen, it leaves them vulnerable on a number of fronts. Not only are victims subject to devastating financial fallout, there have even been reports of victims being arrested for crimes committed by individuals who assumed their identity.

To help combat cases of mistaken identity, Sen. Mike Flood of Norfolk introduced legislation to establish an Identity Theft Passport Program in the Attorney General's Office. The Passport will serve as a shield to protect victims of identity theft from being arrested for crimes committed by someone using their identity.

For more information on identity theft, contact the Attorney General's Consumer Protection Division at 800-727-6432, 402-471-2682 or visit [www.ago.state.ne.us](http://www.ago.state.ne.us). En Espanol, 402-471-3891 o llamada gratuita, 888-850-7555.

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**JON BRUNING**  
ATTORNEY GENERAL

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
February 22, 2005, 4:30 p.m. CT

CONTACT:  
Regan Anson, 402-471-2067

**Attorney General Bruning Announces that ChoicePoint Inc.  
Will Send Notification to 572 Nebraska Consumers Who  
May Be Targeted for Identity Theft**

(Lincoln, Neb.) Attorney General Jon Bruning announced today that Georgia-based ChoicePoint Inc. has agreed to send notification letters by the end of the week to 572 Nebraskans whose personal information may have been released to criminals. ChoicePoint has also agreed to provide the list of potential victims to the Nebraska Department of Justice.

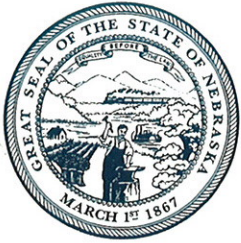
Attorney General Bruning said, "It's devastating to know that 572 Nebraskans, through no fault of their own, may become victims of one of the fastest growing crimes in the country. The Department of Justice will do all we can to help these and all Nebraskans guard against identity theft."

Attorney General Bruning, along with 37 other Attorneys General, sent a letter to ChoicePoint last week demanding that they notify all consumers who may be affected by this criminal activity. The company, which had initially sent notification letters to California residents only, has agreed to notify all consumers whose personal information was compromised.

Documents containing information ranging from name, address, social security numbers and/or driver's license numbers to abbreviated credit reports were obtained. ChoicePoint has purchased credit reports and a one-year credit monitoring service for each individual who had their information compromised.

For more information on identity theft, contact the Attorney General's Consumer Protection Division at 800-727-6432, 402-471-2682 or visit [www.ago.state.ne.us](http://www.ago.state.ne.us). En Espanol, 402-471-3891 o llamada gratuita, 888-850-7555.

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**JON BRUNING**  
ATTORNEY GENERAL

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
February 18, 2005, 9:30 a.m. CT

CONTACT:  
Regan Anson, 402-471-2067

## **Attorney General Bruning Announces Sentence for Child Sexual Predator**

(Lincoln, Neb.) Attorney General Jon Bruning today announced that his office, working in conjunction with the Thayer County Attorney's Office, obtained a prison sentence of 15-30 years against a Byron man charged with first degree sexual assault of a child, a Class II felony.

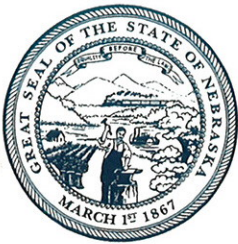
Matthew Fuller, 31, was convicted on Nov. 10, 2004, in Thayer County District Court of sexually assaulting a young girl. Fuller will be required to register as a sex offender for the rest of his life upon his release from prison.

Attorney General Bruning said, "My number one priority as Attorney General is protecting our kids, and putting child sexual predators behind bars where they belong is critical to that effort. The Nebraska Department of Justice will continue to do everything in our power to ensure that these criminals are off our streets."

Assistant Attorney General Marie Clarke and Thayer County Attorney Dan Werner handled the case.

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**JON BRUNING**  
ATTORNEY GENERAL

Attorney General Jon Bruning  
Guest Column: February 17, 2005  
Contact: Regan Anson, 402-471-2067

**Consumer Protection Division Recovers More Than \$1 Million for Nebraskans**

Consumer protection is a top priority for me as Attorney General. That's why I'm proud to announce that my office was able to recover \$1,069,983 on behalf of Nebraska consumers in 2004. What's more, I pledge to continue our fight to reclaim Nebraskans' hard-earned money long into the future.

The Consumer Protection Division of the Nebraska Department of Justice works to protect Nebraskans from fraud by providing mediation services to help consumers resolve complaints against businesses. The division also provides information on current scams operating in Nebraska and ways to protect consumers from fraud.

In 2004, the Consumer Protection Division's Mediation Center opened a record 4,345 complaints, 3,984 of which were successfully closed by year's end. Additionally, the Mediation Center fielded a total of 9,192 phone calls from consumers seeking assistance.

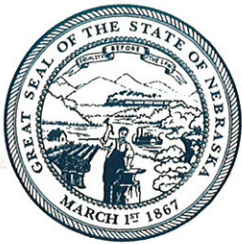
The top three recovery areas for 2004 are:

1. Personal Services - \$229,293 *(Includes individual fraud complaints against companies ranging from employment agencies to insurance companies.)*
2. Motor Vehicles - \$177,224 *(Includes individual fraud complaints regarding car repairs, sales, rentals and aftermarket warranties.)*
3. Credit & Financial - \$174,575 *(Includes billing complaints against credit card and financial institutions for disputed and erroneous charges.)*

The top 10 types of complaints lodged in 2004 are:

1. Membership Services - 1,345 *(Includes discount buying club memberships.)*
2. Identity Theft - 788 *(Includes Nebraska complaints filed with the Federal Trade Commission.)*
3. Motor Vehicles - 353
4. Internet Transactions - 267 *(Includes online purchases or sales.)*
5. Personal & Household Products - 249
6. Personal Services - 227
7. Sweepstakes & Lotteries - 201
8. Home Improvement - 195
9. Nigerian Scam - 175
10. Credit Cards - 78

For additional information on consumer fraud, contact our Consumer Protection Division at 800-727-6432, 402-471-2682 or visit [www.ago.state.ne.us](http://www.ago.state.ne.us). En Espanol, 402-471-3891 o llamada gratuita, 888-850-7555.



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**JON BRUNING**  
ATTORNEY GENERAL

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
February 17, 2005, 10:00 a.m. CT

CONTACT:  
Regan Anson, 402-471-2067

## **Attorney General's Consumer Protection Division Recovers More Than \$1 Million for Nebraska Consumers in 2004**

(Lincoln, Neb.) Attorney General Jon Bruning announced today that the Consumer Protection Division of the Nebraska Department of Justice recovered \$1,069,983 on behalf of Nebraska consumers in 2004.

Attorney General Bruning said, "Consumer protection is a top priority for me as Attorney General. I'm proud that my office recovered more than a million dollars on behalf of Nebraska consumers in 2004. This is something that our office cares deeply about, and we are going to continue to fight to reclaim Nebraskans' hard-earned money."

In 2004, the Consumer Protection Division's Mediation Center opened a record 4,345 complaints, 3,984 of which were closed by year's end. Additionally, the Mediation Center fielded a total of 9,192 phone calls from consumers seeking assistance.

The Consumer Protection Division protects Nebraskans from fraud by providing a mediation service to help consumers resolve complaints against businesses. The division also provides information on current scams operating in Nebraskans and ways to protect consumers from fraud.

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*(more)*



*\$1 Million Recovered for Neb. Consumers, Page 2*  
*February 17, 2005*

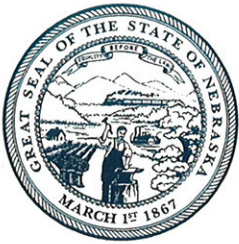
The top 10 types of complaints lodged in 2004 include:

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For additional information on consumer fraud, contact the Attorney General's Consumer Protection Division at 800-727-6432, 402-471-2682 or visit [www.ago.state.ne.us](http://www.ago.state.ne.us). En Espanol, 402-471-3891 o llamada gratuita, 888-850-7555.

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*Editor's Note: An audio clip featuring comments from the Attorney General is now available online at [www.ago.state.ne.us](http://www.ago.state.ne.us).*



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**JON BRUNING**  
ATTORNEY GENERAL

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
February 9, 2005, 9:30 a.m. CT

CONTACT:  
Regan Anson, 402-471-2067

**Attorney General Bruning Announces  
National Consumer Protection Week 2005**  
*This Year's Focus, "Identity Theft: When Fact Becomes Fiction"*

(Lincoln, Neb.) Attorney General Jon Bruning today announced that the Nebraska Department of Justice has joined a group of federal, state and local agencies and national advocacy organizations in launching the seventh annual National Consumer Protection Week (NCPW), Feb. 6-12, 2005, highlighting consumer protection and education efforts around the country. The year's theme is "Identity Theft: When Fact Becomes Fiction."

Attorney General Bruning said, "People who have their identity stolen can spend months or years and thousands of dollars of their hard-earned money cleaning up the mess thieves have made of their good name and credit record. It's important to take precautions to avoid devastating financial fallout."

This year's NCPW focuses on minimizing the risk of identity theft and taking fast action should an identity thief strike. During NCPW, agency representatives will help consumers of all ages understand how identity theft occurs, the signs to look for, how to reduce the chances of becoming a victim, and how to get help if their personal information is compromised and used to open new accounts.

Attorney General Bruning was joined at the announcement by U.S. Attorney Mike Heavican, U.S. Postal Inspector Paul Beekhuizen, State Sen. Mike Flood and Better Business Bureau President Scott Mecham.

Heavican said, "The U.S. Attorney's Office is committed to helping protect citizens, especially the elderly, from identity theft and other consumer fraud crimes."

Sen. Flood, who is sponsoring legislation on behalf of Attorney General Bruning to create an Identity Theft Passport Program, said, "The Identity Theft Passport Program will help victims of identity theft regain the very thing that is most important to them - their identity."

*(more)*



Beekhuizen, who spoke about other areas of consumer protection, including work at home and foreign lottery scams, said, "With so many Americans interested in working at home, it should come as no surprise that job scams have grown in popularity – but too many offers not only don't pay, they cost victims thousands of dollars."

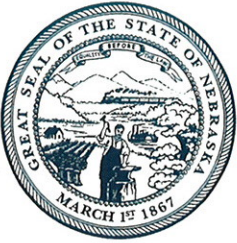
Mecham said, "Nebraskans are being victimized by scams and identity theft every day. They are problems that are very real and hit very close to home. The best way Nebraskans can protect themselves is through education, and that is what we are promoting with this event."

Attorney General Bruning said it's important to protect identifying information, including a person's name, address, date of birth, social security number and/or mother's maiden name. Thieves who obtain this information may act as an imposter and use the information to open credit card accounts, deplete savings accounts, apply for loans and/or purchase automobiles. Keeping track of one's credit, safeguarding wallets and putting strong passwords on bank, credit card and phone accounts can help consumers minimize their risk of identity theft.

Identity theft has been at the top of the government's list of consumer frauds for the past several years. In 2002, the Federal Trade Commission reported 454 identity theft complaints from Nebraska. By 2004, that number climbed to 788.

For additional information identity theft, visit the Attorney General's Web site at [www.ago.state.ne.us](http://www.ago.state.ne.us) or call 800-727-6432.

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**JON BRUNING**  
ATTORNEY GENERAL

MEDIA ADVISORY  
February 9, 2005, 7:00 a.m. CT

CONTACT:  
Regan Anson, 402-471-2067

**\*\*\*MEDIA ADVISORY\*\*\***  
**Attorney General Bruning to Hold News**  
**Conference at 9:30 a.m. CT TODAY**

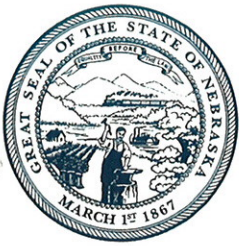
Attorney General Jon Bruning will hold a news conference at 9:30 a.m. CT today, Wednesday, Feb. 9, in Room 2115 at the State Capitol in Lincoln.

The Attorney General will be joined by U.S. Attorney Mike Heavican, U.S. Postal Inspector Paul Beekhuizen, Sen. Mike Flood of Norfolk and Better Business Bureau President Scott Mecham in announcing national Consumer Protection Week. This year's focus is "Identity Theft: When Fact Becomes Fiction."

For a live audio feed, dial 866-247-0709 and code 402-471-2682 at the prompt.

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**JON BRUNING**  
ATTORNEY GENERAL

MEDIA ADVISORY  
February 8, 2005, 11:10 a.m. CT

CONTACT:  
Regan Anson, 402-471-2067

**\*\*\*MEDIA ADVISORY\*\*\***

**Attorney General Bruning to Hold News  
Conference at 9:30 a.m. CT TOMORROW**

Attorney General Jon Bruning will hold a news conference at 9:30 a.m. CT tomorrow, Wednesday, Feb. 9, in Room 2115 at the State Capitol in Lincoln.

The Attorney General will be joined by U.S. Attorney Mike Heavican, U.S. Postal Inspector Paul Beekhuizen, Sen. Mike Flood of Norfolk and Better Business Bureau President Scott Mecham in announcing national Consumer Protection Week.

For a live audio feed, dial 866-247-0709 and code 402-471-2682 at the prompt.

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